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9 DEC 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM:

[REDACTED]  
Plans and Programs Staff, OL

SUBJECT: Interagency Committee on Metrication Policy (ICMP)

1. A meeting of the Transportation Division, Metrication Operating Committee (MOC), Interagency Committee on Metrication Policy (ICMP), was held at the Department of Transportation on 6 December 1977. The meeting was chaired by Robert L. Paullin, Acting Director, Plans and Resources Division, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Technology, Department of Transportation. I attended as the Agency representative to that committee. A copy of the agenda, list of attendees, and a proposed draft of the establishment, organization, and operations of divisions of the ICMP/MOC is attached.

2. The purpose of the meeting was to determine if the MOC should be organized into divisions, to include a transportation division; to determine if the divisions should be organized along functional lines, i.e., aviation, highways, rail, marine, etc.; and thirdly, to review the proposed draft to establish divisions under the MOC.

3. There appeared to be a positive exchange of dialogue and ideas among the members of the committee, and in particular among representatives of the regulatory agency who will eventually become involved in developing and implementing a large part of the program to effect the transition to the metric system. There seemed to be general agreement that the formation of divisions under the MOC would be useful. As to the structure of the divisions themselves, two general thoughts emerged: one, that the divisions be structured along functional lines as stated above; and two, that the divisions be structured along substantive lines, such as tariffs, regulations, education, training, etc.

4. It was agreed before a decision concerning division structure is made, that each agency should prepare a metrication impact paper, which will address any areas of concern.

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questions or problems the Agency may foresee in making the conversion, and how it would propose to make the change to the metric system. This information will help the committee in establishing a data base, and it will also be of assistance in structuring the division so that it can best be responsive to the agencies' needs. This plan should be available to the committee by the first of February. Ad hoc committees will be established by Mr. Paullin to collate the plans and to present them at the next general meeting.

5. There was some discussion concerning the mandatory versus the voluntary provisions of the Metrication Act of 1975. I am not conversant with this act at this time. My impression from the discussion which ensued is that a large part of the metrication program is voluntary.

6. My presence at the meeting was simply to observe, and to attempt to ascertain what role, if any, the Agency should play in the ICMP. Frankly, I am not convinced we have one. The regulatory agencies certainly do, and we as an agency will no doubt be effected by the conversion to the metric system, as will all government agencies, individuals, and private and commercial sectors of the economy. I think we in the Agency should keep ourselves informed as to what is going on in the area of metrication, and perhaps we should begin to identify areas in the Agency which will be most effected by the change. We should probably look towards developing both short and long term plans to effect the transition if and when it comes about, or as it comes about. I really don't see the Agency as having an active role in the national program, per se. I do believe the Agency should participate in any of the governmental committees where it feels it can make a positive contribution. The next general meeting will be scheduled for sometime in May.



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